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Agenda item 71 (m)

General and complete disarmament: nuclear disarmament

Note by the Secretary-General

1. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/45 O of 10 December 1996, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", paragraphs 3 to 7 of which read as follows:

> "*The General Assembly,*
>
> "...
>
> "3. *Urges* the nuclear-weapon States to stop immediately the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems;
>
> "4. *Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to undertake the step-by-step reduction of the nuclear threat and a phased programme of progressive and balanced deep reductions of nuclear weapons, and to carry out effective nuclear disarmament measures with a view to the total elimination of these weapons within a time-bound framework;
>
> "5. *Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to establish, on a priority basis, an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to commence negotiations early in 1997 on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament and for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework through a nuclear weapons convention;
>
> "6. *Urges* the Conference on Disarmament to take into account in this regard the proposal of the twenty-eight delegations for a programme of action for the elimination of nuclear weapons;

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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"7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

"..."

2. In connection with the implementation of the above resolution, a number of proposals and initiatives have been put forward. In this connection, the Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the report of the Conference on Disarmament (A/52/27) on its 1997 session, which contains proposals made regarding the points raised in the resolution.

3. The Secretary-General notes the efforts undertaken unilaterally or bilaterally by the nuclear-weapon States to further reduce nuclear weapons, building on the progress already achieved. He welcomes the Joint Statement on Parameters on Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces[1] issued by the Russian Federation and the United States of America at their summit meeting held at Helsinki in March 1997, which underlines the commitment of the two Governments to begin negotiations on a START III agreement, once START II has entered into force.

4. The Secretary-General has also taken note of the joint statement by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, made at the first session of the Preparatory Committee of the new review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in which they reaffirm their determination to continue the pursuit by the nuclear-weapon States of systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons, and by all States of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

5. Notwithstanding these developments, including the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the consolidation of various nuclear-weapon-free arrangements, the Secretary-General notes that weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, continue to be of utmost concern. The systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons, in particular by the nuclear-weapon States, with the ultimate goal of their complete elimination, remains a priority task to be pursued vigorously by the international community.

Notes

[1] See CD/1460.